

Amendments to the Drawings

Submitted herewith are thirteen (13) sheets of Replacement drawings with Figures 1-13, corresponding to the above-captioned application. The thirteen (13) sheets of Replacement drawings are to replace the informal drawings as filed on October 29, 2003. Identification of the drawings is provided in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(c). Acknowledgment of the receipt, approval, and entry of these drawings into this application is respectfully requested.

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 12-44 are pending in the application, with claims 12, 18 and 25 being the independent claims. Claims 12-38 are sought to be amended. New claims 39-44 are sought to be added. Applicants have submitted thirteen (13) sheets of Replacement drawings to replace informal drawings as filed on October 29, 2003. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

With respect to this Application, Applicants hereby rescind any disclaimer of claim scope made in the parent application or any predecessor or related application. The Examiner is advised that any previous disclaimer of claim scope, if any, and the alleged prior art that it was made to allegedly avoid, may need to be revisited. Nor should any previous disclaimer of claim scope, if any, in this Application be read back into any predecessor or related application.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12, 15, 16, 18-20, 25-27, and 31-38

Claims 12, 15, 16, 18-20, 25-27, and 31-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over United States Patent Publication No. 2003/0120791 to Weber et al. (herein "Weber") in view of United States Patent

Publication No. 2001/0017595 to Cliff et al. (herein "Cliff"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and provide the following arguments to support patentability.

Claim 12 as amended is patentable over the art of record. The combination of Weber and Cliff does not teach or suggest at least the features of "a plurality of ports including a plurality of programmable pads, wherein a first programmable pad in said plurality of programmable pads is part of a first parallel port and a second programmable pad in said plurality of programmable pads is part of a first serial port, wherein at least one of said first programmable pad and said second programmable pad is configurable to operate with a plurality of electrical specifications and a plurality of data protocols" as recited by claim 12. Dependent claims 15, 16, and 31-38 are likewise not rendered obvious the combination of Weber and Cliff for the same reasons as claim 12 from which they depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 12, 15, 16, and 31-38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The combination of Weber and Cliff does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 18. For example, as to be discussed below, Weber does not teach or suggest at least the features of "sending a second control signal to instruct said programmable pad to function as an output or an input based on said protocol and electrical specification instructions, after executing said protocol and electrical specification instructions" as recited by claim 18. Cliff does not provide the missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claim 1, nor does the Office Action allege that Cliff provides the missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claim 1 to render

claim 1 obvious. Therefore, the Office Action fails to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

The Office Action alleges that "data presenters 460-463, aggregators 440-443, and corresponding encoders 470-473/decoders 420-423" of Weber teach or suggest "a programmable pad" as recited by claim 18. (*see*, Office Action, Page 4). The data presenters 460-463, aggregators 440-443, and corresponding encoders 470-473/decoders 420-423 each *have a defined output and/or input that is not configurable*. For example, according to Weber, the parallel data is decoded by decoders 420-423 and delivered to buffers 430-433." (*see*, Weber, para. [0024]). The aggregators 440-443 "receive data stored in buffers 430-433 and align the data properly according to a desired protocol definition." (*see*, Weber, para. [0023]). The data presenters 460-463 "may perform an algorithm on the data to present data according to a desired protocol." (*see*, Weber, para. [0024]). After the data has been modified according to the desired protocol definition, the data stream is transferred to encoders 470-473 for encoding. (*see*, Weber, para. [0025]). The encoders 470-473 encode the data stream "according to the desired protocol definition." (*see*, Weber, para. [0025]).

In contrast to Weber, claim 18 recites "*sending a second control signal* to instruct said programmable pad to function as an output or an input based on said protocol and electrical specification instructions, after executing said protocol and electrical specification instructions." (*emphasis added, see*, claim 18). As discussed above, the programmable pads of Weber, namely the data presenters 460-463, the aggregators 440-443, and corresponding encoders 470-473/decoders 420-423, have a defined output and/or input that is not configurable, therefore Weber does not teach or

suggest "sending a second control signal to instruct said programmable pad to function as an output or an input based on said protocol and electrical specification instructions, after executing said protocol and electrical specification instructions" as recited by claim 18. Cliff does not provide the missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claim 18, nor does the Office Action allege that Cliff provides the missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claim 18 to render claim 18 obvious. Dependent claims 19 and 20 are likewise not rendered obvious by the combination of Weber and Cliff for the same reasons as claim 18 from which they depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 25 as amended is patentable over the art of record. For example, the combination of Weber and Cliff does not teach nor suggest at least the features of "a plurality of ports including a plurality of programmable pads, wherein a first programmable pad in said plurality of programmable pads is part of a first parallel port and a second programmable pad in said plurality of programmable pads is part of a first serial port, wherein at least one of said first programmable pad and said second programmable pad is configurable to operate with a plurality of electrical specifications and a plurality of data protocols" as recited by claim 25. Dependent claims 26 and 27 are likewise not rendered obvious the combination of Weber and Cliff for the same reasons as claim 25 from which they depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 17, 21, and 28

Claims 17, 21, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of Cliff and in further view of United States Patent Publication No. 2003/0172332 to Rearick (herein "Rearick"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and provide the following arguments to support patentability.

As discussed above, the combination of Weber and Cliff does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claims 12 and 18. Rearick does not provide the missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claims 12 and 18. Thus, the combination of Weber, Cliff, and Rearick does not render obvious claims 12 and 18. Dependent claims 17, 21, and 28 are likewise not rendered obvious by the combination of Weber, Cliff, and Rearick for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they respectively depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 17, 21, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 13, 22-24, 29, and 30

Claims 13, 22-24, 29, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of Cliff and in further view of United States Patent Publication No. 2003/0172332 to Taniguchi (herein "Taniguchi"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and provide the following arguments to support patentability.

As discussed above, the combination of Weber and Cliff does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claims 12, 18, and 25. Taniguchi does not provide the

missing teachings or suggestions with respect to claims 12, 18, and 25. Thus, the combination of Weber, Cliff, and Taniguchi does not render obvious claims 12, 18, and 25. Dependent claims 13, 22-24, 29, and 30 are likewise not rendered obvious by the combination of Weber, Cliff, and Taniguchi for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they respectively depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 13, 22-24, 29, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Other Matters

Claims 39-44

New claims 39-44 have been added. From the discussion above, Applicants have traversed the rejections to independent claims 12 and 25. Dependent claims 39-44 are likewise allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they respectively depend and further in view of their own respective features.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A: Replacement Drawings